

TPEAC Watershed Subcommittee Highlights, Feb. 10, 2003

Point Plaza West, WSDOT Tumwater Design Conference Room

Attendance:

Bob Zeigler, Claire Schary, Heather Roughgarden, Richard Gersib, Christina Martinez, Tim Hilliard, Mary Gray, Barb Aberle, Phil Miller, Wendy Compton-Ring, Annie Szvetecz, Susan Everett, Peter Birch, Stephen Bernath, Becky Michaliszyn, Bart Gernhart.

Dick Gersib reviewed the technical team's "Conclusions and Lessons Learned" handout which will be presented to TPEAC on Wed. Feb. 12:

- Comment made that wetland biologist needed on technical team.
- Comment made that Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) guidance could be used to help develop guidance for technical team development.
- Comment made that FHWA, Services, others have a group working on indirect effects that could have some insights useful to some of this work
- Last "lesson" ("To minimize financial risk to WSDOT, policy guidelines should be developed ...") discussed in detail. After discussion, there was general agreement that it is for benefit of all parties.
- Need clear message to TPEAC that this is the product of the technical team, not the subcommittee.

Discussion of timing of review:

- Same or different review period for peer review, Subcommittee review?
- Phil Miller: What is the driver for timing? Some date it "needs to be done?" Can the two reviews be done as a parallel process? Is peer review comprehensive enough? Mary Gray said: "FHWA dollars are the driver!" Susan Everett: Need final draft before planning for beta test.
- Bob Zeigler concerned about lack of addressing direct impacts on areas or resources outside of the right-of-way.
- Peer reviewers will have specific questions; Subcommittee reviewers will be asked "what issues does your agency have?"
- Stephen Bernath commented that he feels Stormwater needs to be in a separate document. Dick Gersib disagreed, but asked that Stephen have Ecology provide a formal written request so that the issue can be elevated through the TPEAC dispute resolution process.

<p>Decision that written or electronic comments from the peer review participants and the Subcommittee members will be due on or before March 17th 2003. Comments will be sent to Tim Hilliard (contact information will provided in the formal notice of availability of the review draft documents).</p>
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Water Quality Trading presentation by Stephen Bernath Ecology, and Claire Schary, EPA:

- EPA's trading policy in works since 1980s, 1996 draft policy was skimpy; new draft is much detailed. Trading any combination of point source and nonpoint source in current Clean Water Act context - trades normally require higher ratios – net environmental benefits; nonpoint less certain so usually higher ratios required.
- Trading is currently allowed for conventional pollutants (FC, DO, BOD, pH, temperature, etc.) but pilot projects are in the works to look at toxics; trading to meet technology-based requirements is a no-no; still can't have hot spots, can't degrade WQ even when currently better than standards; trading is reflected in NPDES permits. Public involvement is crucial
- Idaho examples discussed: framework ready, but TMDLs not completed

Discussion of selection criteria for the beta test:

- Susan Everett presented a draft selection criteria list developed by a workgroup. Susan found a list of potential projects in WSDOT Southwest and Northwest regions.
- Mary Gray clarified watershed approach grant issues:
 - First part was to develop methods; second part to address ultra-urban, funded project such as North Renton (SR 169 to Coal Creek Parkway) project
 - Mary warned that the subcommittee can suggest another area, but FHWA grant money may be in jeopardy if FHWA does not agree that grant objectives are not met by the selected beta test project
- Discussion of criteria resulted in a refined list (see below)
- Presentation of projects:
 - I-5: Rush Road to 13th St. (Lewis County)
 - I-5: 219th St. Interchange (Clark County)
 - I-5: 134th St. Interchange (Clark County)
 - I-405: North Renton Project (SR 169 to Coal Creek Parkway, King County)
- These four were weighed against the criteria and all were considered. After discussion, narrowed to 134th St. Interchange and North Renton Project.
- Stephen Bernath was concerned about another project in a small drainage

Tentative decision for beta test is to go with North Renton Project on I-405, pending support from Ecology, NOAA Fisheries, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. These are the key agencies involved with stormwater and ESA issues. They need to provide feedback to Richard Gersib by March 3 on the applicability of the potential beta test site for development and testing of watershed-based methods to address stormwater and ESA issues.

Discussion of workplan

Decision to present at April TPEAC meeting

Timeline for near future:

- March 3 deadline for guidance on beta test
- March 17: complete subcommittee review of review draft documents, submit comments to Tim Hilliard
- March 17: complete peer review of review draft documents, submit comments to Dick Gersib
- March 20 – Watershed Subcommittee meeting
- April TPEAC meeting: present draft workplan

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM

Project Selection Criteria for the Beta Test:

On January 27, 2003 a work group of the TPEAC Watershed Subcommittee, led by Susan Everett, met to determine the section criteria for the beta test project. On February 10, 2003 the TPEAC Watershed Subcommittee met and agreed to the following slightly modified criteria for selecting the Beta Test project.

Selection Criteria:

1. The project is in the early stages, so the results of the watershed characterization process could be incorporated into the project design.
2. The project is in an urban or urbanizing area.
3. The project is an expansion of a current alignment or a new alignment.
4. The project requires an individual U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit.
5. The project has an ESA issue, such as the presence of bull trout and/or ESA listed salmonids within the project area.
6. WSDOT project team is willing to participate in the beta test.
7. The following items are desirable when selecting a beta test project:
 - a. There is a local watershed group(s) and there is a plan for the watershed's recovery.
 - b. SSHIAP data available.

It is believed that the above criteria will capture projects that have the following attributes:

- The project has storm water issues.
- The project team would consider alternative strategies for addressing storm water issues.

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- Project that has multiple environmental issues such as wetlands, ESA, storm water quantity and storm water quality.
- Project team has an ongoing public information program.
- Water quality and flow data for affected areas is desirable. Studies and models of the flow systems in the project area exist.